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PAGE 01 BUENOS 03215 01 OF 02 012008Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-17 ACDE-00 AMAD-01 CIAE-00 SMEC-00 OASY-00
DODE-00 DOEE-00 DS-00 EUR-01 FBIE-00 TEDE-00 INR-00
ADS-00 NEA-01 NSAE-00 SCT-00 DSAC-00 DRL-09 G-00
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R 012006Z JUN 95
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6205
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCCC//
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 003215

E.O. 12356: DECL: DECEMBER 31, 1999
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PTER, AR
SUBJECT: EXTRADITION OF LEBANESE FROM PARAGUAY:
ARGENTINES WONDER WHAT THEY ARE GETTING INTO

THE SCENE

1. (C) NEWS REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE SIX LEBANESE
AND ONE BRAZILIAN LINKED TO THE TWO TERRORIST ATTACKS
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PAGE 02 BUENOS 03215 01 OF 02 012008Z
IN BUENOS AIRES WILL SOON BE EXTRADITED FROM PARAGUAY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 26 NOV 2008 200705645

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TO ARGENTINA. ARGENTINES ARE WONDERING WHETHER, IF EXTRADITED, THESE SUSPECTS WILL PROVIDE A BREAKTHROUGH IN THE 1992 ISRAELI EMBASSY OR, LESS LIKELY, 1994 AMIA TERRORIST BOMBINGS. WITH THREE MONTHS OF HAGGLING OVER THE EXTRADITION NOW SEEMINGLY NEARING AN END, ATTENTION IS FOCUSING ON THE LEGAL RATIONALE FOR BRINGING THEM TO ARGENTINA AND ON WHETHER THERE IS ANY REAL EVIDENCE TO LINK THE SUSPECTS TO EITHER BOMBING. THERE ARE ALSO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BASIS FOR SUSPECTING THEM OF TIES TO MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORIST GROUPS, THE HEZBALLAH ORGANIZATION SPECIFICALLY. ONE CONCERN WHICH WILL SURELY INTENSIFY IF THE SUSPECTS ARE TRANSFERRED TO ARGENTINA IS OVER THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE EXTRADITION MAY ITSELF SPARK THE LONG-FEARED "THIRD ATTACK." IN SHORT, THE MOOD HERE COMBINES BOTH DOUBTS THAT THE EXTRADITEES WILL PROVIDE ANY SMOKING GUN WITH CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS SHOULD THEY, IN FACT, TURN OUT TO BE AUTHENTIC TERRORISTS WHO CAN BE TIED TO THE BUENOS AIRES ATTACKS.

THE JUDGE AND HIS CASE

2. (LOU) FEDERAL JUDGE ROBERTO MARQUEVICH, WHO INITIATED THE REQUEST FOR EXTRADITION OF THE PARAGUAY SEVEN, HAS MADE STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS DOWNPLAYING THE POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN THE SEVEN AND EITHER THE EMBASSY OR AMIA BOMBING. MARQUEVICH WAS QUOTED ON MAY 30 AS SAYING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD LINKED THE

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 03215 01 OF 02 012008Z
SUSPECTS TO THE ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBING BECAUSE OF THE WORLDWIDE INTEREST IN SEEING SOME ACTION ON THE CASE. THE JUDGE MADE CLEAR THAT HIS OWN CASE AGAINST THE SEVEN, AND THE LEGAL BASIS FOR THEIR EXTRADITION, HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH EITHER TERRORIST INCIDENT. INSTEAD, THE SUSPECTS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO THE CASE OF ALEJANDRO SUCKSDORF, AN EXTREME RIGHTIST AND FORMER CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE AGENT EMPLOYED BY THE ARMY. SUCKSDORF WAS ARRESTED IN MID-1994 AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF A WEAPONS ARSENAL ON HIS ISLAND PROPERTY IN THE

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RIVER PLATE DELTA. MARQUEVICH BELIEVES THAT A LINK MAY EXIST BETWEEN SUCKSDORF'S WEAPONS CACHE AND SERGIO RODRIGO SALEM, ONE OF THE PARAGUAY SEVEN. NEITHER THE STRENGTH OF THAT LINK NOR THE EVIDENCE, IF ANY, TO TIE THE OTHERS TO THE CASE IS CLEAR.

THE U.S. AND ISRAELI CONNECTIONS

3. (LOU) PRESS REPORTS AND OTHER SOURCES CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT THE U.S. AND ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS ARE BEHIND THE SCENES ACTORS IN THE CASE AGAINST THE PARAGUAY SEVEN. ISRAELI SOURCES ARE SAID TO HAVE IDENTIFIED THREE OF THE SEVEN -- SERGIO SALEM, MOHAMMAD HASSAN ALAYAN, AND LUIS ALBERTO NADER -- AS INVOLVED IN THE 1992 ISRAELI EMBASSY EXPLOSION. A MAY 30 ARTICLE QUOTES AN ANONYMOUS GOA OFFICIAL AS SAYING THAT IT WAS THE U.S. CIA THAT PUSHED FOR EXTRADITION OF THE SEVEN, SINCE IT HAD INFORMATION THAT THEY WERE INVOLVED WITH HEZBALLAH. THE SOURCE CLAIMS THAT THE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 BUENOS 03215 01 OF 02 012008Z
CIA COULD INTERVIEW THE SUSPECTS HERE, WHEREAS "IT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ACT IN PARAGUAY."

COMMENT

4. (C) WHEN THE PARAGUAY SEVEN CROSS THE BORDER INTO ARGENTINA THEY WON'T GO UNNOTICED. A GREAT DEAL OF PUBLIC ATTENTION WILL BE FOCUSED ON THESE MYSTERIOUS FIGURES, ATTENTION BASED ON THEIR NOTORIETY AS POSSIBLE HEZBALLAH MEMBERS AND ACCOMPLICES IN TERRORIST ATTACKS WHOSE PERPETRATORS REMAIN MYSTERIES. THEY COULD ALSO BE THE INSTIGATORS OF SOME ACT OF RETRIBUTION BY THEIR COHORTS, A CHILLING THOUGHT WHICH DRAWS ADDITIONAL ATTENTION IN THEIR DIRECTION.

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5. (C) QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DETAINEES ABOUND. HOW
WILL THE GOVERNMENT PROCEED AGAINST THEM? ON WHAT
CHARGES WILL THEY BE HELD? HOW LONG CAN THEY BE HELD

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SUBJECT: EXTRADITION OF LEBANESE FROM PARAGUAY:

ARGENTINES WONDER WHAT THEY ARE GETTING INTO

WITHOUT SOLID EVIDENCE? AND WHAT ROLE WILL THOSE IN
CHARGE OF THE ISRAELI EMBASSY AND AMIA BOMBINGS, THE
STRANGELY SILENT SUPREME COURT JUSTICE LEVENE AND
JUDGE GALEANO, HAVE IN THE PROCESS AGAINST THE SEVEN?
IN A WORD, HOW PREPARED IS THE GOA FOR THE POSSIBILITY
THAT THIS GROUP OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS WILL HAVE

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 03215 02 OF 02 012008Z
NOTHING TO REVEAL OR, ALTERNATIVELY, FOR THE PROSPECT
OF A BREAKTHROUGH IN TWO NOTORIOUS AND LONG-STALLED
CASES? WE ADDRESS THOSE ISSUES IN A FOLLOW-UP CABLE.

CHEEK

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